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California's Ocean Protection Council to Identify Research Strategy, Will Vote to Send Research Priorities to Bush Administration

California and the World Ocean Conference '06 Announced, Funding Highlighted

La Jolla, Calif. – California's Ocean Protection Council (OPC) today will identify their research strategy and vote to send information, research and outreach priorities to the Bush administration. The meeting, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and broadcast live on the council's Web site, will be held at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography., Scripps/Eckart Library, 8755 Biological Grade, La Jolla, Calif.

"The Ocean Protection Council will be discussing new steps California can take in maintaining the health of our ocean and coastal resources," said Secretary for Resources and Council Chairman Mike Chrisman. "One of our objectives is to determine how the federal government can set ocean protection and research priorities that satisfy the goals of both California and President Bush's Ocean Action Plan. This step is vital in addressing issues that are important to all who care about the protection and stewardship of our ocean and coast."

Research priorities that the council will consider will include but are not limited to: fisheries analysis and aquaculture; protection and restoration of organisms, habitats and ecosystems; beach and shoreline management and coastal hazard identification; strategies to improve air, water and sediment quality; invasive species prevention; expanded outreach efforts.

The council will also vote to adopt the "California Ocean and Coastal Information, Research, and Outreach Strategy" (IRO). The IRO will outline recommendations that will be forwarded to the Bush administration for inclusion in the President's Ocean Action Plan. These will include but not be limited to: including the council's priorities as part of the President's Ocean Action Plan; making research funding and ocean monitoring a priority, identifying California's ocean observing system as a national model; enhancing access to and improving coordination of ocean and coastal information; incorporating ocean and coastal science into K-12 and adult education programs; building an outreach strategy with federal, state and local partners. The IRO will place California among the first states in the country to forward recommendations to the federal government.

Additional items on the meeting agenda will address funding for projects related to ocean and coastal protection. Secretary Chrisman will also announce that the fourth "California and the World Ocean Conference '06" will be held in Long Beach, Calif., Sept. 17-20, 2006. This conference will convene state, national, and international experts to work with the Ocean Protection Council on management of California's ocean and coastal resources.

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The five-member California Ocean Protection Council was formed as part of the 2004 California Ocean Protection Act. The Council includes; Chair Chrisman, Cal-EPA Secretary Alan Lloyd, Lieutenant Governor Cruz Bustamante, State Sen. Sheila Kuehl, and Assemblyman Pedro Nava to focus on protecting California's ocean and coast.

To view the Webcast and access the meeting agenda and briefing documents please visit the Ocean Protection Council's new Web site at: <http://resources.ca.gov/copc/>.